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* THE EDITORS DESK                                       by Ron Kovacs
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Sorry we missed you last week. I attended the WAACE Atarifest and could
not produce an issue. I apologize for any inconvience this may have
caused. There were plans to produce an issue, but staff commitments to
other pending projects made the task impossible.

This week we conclude a number of columns that were started a few weeks
ago. This issus is also larger then our regular edition so we can
include WAACE and Seybold reports scheduled for last week's edition.

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* WAACE SHOW REPORT                                      by Ron Kovacs
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The 1991 WAACE Atarifest took place last weekend in Reston Virginia and
was a success. Details are forthcoming but first my impressions.

The show was worthwhile and a lot of fun. In between watching the
confirmation hearings (re-runs) until early morning and chatting with
friends and some developers, I had a great weekend. It was a pleasure
meeting everyone and seeing those new friends who were faceless until
now. I was sorry to miss a few who had planned attending and I hope to
see them in the future.

The show started with a rush of people and was steady for most of the day Saturday. Everyone was buying! I spent a lot of my time in the Rising Star Computers booth with friends Bruce Hansford and Doug Hodson. These guys sold almost everything at this event and went away VERY pleased with the results. Other developers and sellers also enjoyed good sales turning this event into a successful show. A run down on the attendees later...

Saturday afternoon there was an attempt at a live Online conference from the WAACE show. Myself and Darlah were there for nearly 20 minutes without any great turnout, however, John Nagy, John King Tarpininian and a few others were ready to ask those important questions. I bailed out to attend Ralph Mariano's seminar and sit in on Bob Brodies' after.

Saturday evening's banquet was very interesting. However, the enjoyment was almost lost when we were served the food...(sheesh.. didn't know that chicken could actually taste like cardboard with sauce on it..), the other offerings were a lot better though.

Current Notes publisher Joe Waters announced David Troy as "Current Notes Author of the Year." John Barnes was the winner last year. The keynote speech was given by Nathan Potechin. (His full speech appears in this edition) Before the speech Nathan announced that IAAD (Independent Association of Atari Developers) held a meeting and elected Nevin Shalit of Step Ahead Software, the new President of the organization. (Good Luck Nevin)

After the banquet there was a get together in two rooms in the hotel. As in previous years this is an interesting event that was just that and need not be discussed. Attending these types of social events give you a new prespective of the Atari users you read about. However, the most notable community members were NOT in attendance very long.

Sunday brought a more users to the event. Not as busy as Saturday, but there was a steady stream of users until the closing minutes. Again, seminars were held and prizes awarded to attendees after the close. Bob Brodie and Charles Smeton announced winners.

Here is a rundown on the developers and vendors at this event.

CODEHEAD SOFTWARE
Showing Avant Vector and upgrading software titles such as MaxiFile III, MultiDesk Deluxe, Hotwire and other Codehead Utilities. Avant Vector was selling for $449.00 and I heard later that this was their best show ever. They sold over 100 copies MultiDesk Deluxe. CodeHead, PO Box 74090, Los Angeles, California, 90004, (213) 386-5735.

CURRENT NOTES
Joe Waters on hand selling new subscriptions, (which I took), and selling a complete catalog of Current Notes PD disks. Current Notes, 122 N. Johnson Road, Sterling, Virginia, 22170, (703) 450-4761.

CLEAR THINKING
Showed version 2.2 of EdHak, a text, disk and memory editor. For more information contact Clear Thinking, PO Box 715, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48105, (313) 971-8671.

D.A. BRUMLEVE
Showing off here software for children. Everytime I passed her booth
there were kids playing and people buying. Since I now have a daughter
attending Kindergarten, I bought my first DAB program and will have to
do my own review! Watch out Dot! BTW: She was wearing an interesting
button on Sunday... Don't know if I can say it here though?? (grin)
Products shown; KidPublisher, KidPainter, TeleGram and Super KidGrid.
D.A. Brumleve, PO Box 4195, Urbana, Illinois, 61801.

DEBONAIR SOFTWARE
These guys were in the same booth with Dorothy and showing El Cal and
Starbase. These "guys" are really J. Andrzej Wrotniak. El Cal is an
"Elementary Calculator." Debonair, PO Box 521166, Salt Lake City, Utah,
84152-1166.

DOUBLE CLICK SOFTWARE
DC Data Diet was shown and selling well along with upgrading of previous
released software. Other DC programs; DC Desktop, DC Utilities 2.0, DC
Shower and many others... DCS, PO Box 741206, Houston, Texas, 77274,
(713) 977-6520.

ESTEEM
Very interesting booth. I enjoyed the demonstration of this PILOT
language for the ST. The software I saw during the demo included some
interesting fonts not usually seen. The way there are including the
different fonts is via PageStream. The fonts are coverted to IMG format
and them placed for use in the software. The result is different and
pleasing. The other interesting point is the demo for a shell game. I
could NOT select what shell had the ball! The interaction between this
software and the CD was impressive! We will be focusing on this
software in a future edition. Esteem, 72 Shades Crest Road, Hoover, Al,
35226, (205) 941-4910.

FAST TECHNOLOGY
Jim Allen showed the Turbo 20 in two versions -20Mhz and -25Mhz. The
Turbo 030 in two versions, -cache only and -4mb of RAM. Fast Tech, PO
Box 578, Andover, MA, 01810, (508) 475-3810.

GADGETS BY SMALL
The SST Tower 68030 was up and running.

GENIE
Darlah Pine and JJ Kennedy were on hand demonstrating Alladin and
selling copies for just $1.00. Tours of the service were available!
For more information about GEnie, see the information at the end of this
edition. Note: It was a pleasure seeing Darlah and crew again. I
missed seeing Sandy though...

GRIBNIF SOFTWARE
The Gribnif clan was in attendance with ALL the current software titles
and upgrades to NeoDesk, Steno, Cardfile, and Stalker. Orders for the
new graphics program Arabesque were being taken. Gribnif, PO Box 350,
Hadley, MA, 01035, (413) 584-7887.

ICD
The usual products were available and selling well throughout the event.
Other vendors had AdSpeed and AdSpeed STe for sale along with ICD and
all had great sales. I also finally meet Chuck Leazott. If you are
former Z*Mag readers, you might remember the Hard Disk Users Group,
(HDUG), which we covered from time to time. Chuck has since moved on to
ICD enjoying new success and a new marriage. ICD, 1220 Rock St,
Rockford, Il, 61101, (815) 968-2228.

ISD MARKETING
The first booth by ISD and the usual fantastic offerings were available,
including the latest versions of Calamus, Outline Art and DynaCADD.

JMG SOFTWARE
HyperLink with multi-windowing was shown. For more information contact:
JMG, 892 Upper James Street, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L9C 3A5, (416)
575-3201.

JOPPA COMPUTER
Software and hardware for sale both days. 20 new computer systems were
sold during the show. Other products include the JoppaFax, Joppa hard
drives and removable systems. Joppa, (301) 676-1948.

L&Y ELECTRONICS
An Atari dealer with lots of software spread out for sale. Good prices
and also available were European Atari magazines. L&Y, 13644C Jeff
Davis Highway, Woodbridge, VA, 22191, (703) 494-3444.

MACDONALD ASSOCIATES
ST-Informer subscriptions available, upgrades to Universal Item
Selector, and the newest offering, the Universal Network. Upgrades to
Version 3.3 of UIS were only $8.00 if you brought your original disk.
Application and Design Software, 280 Peach Street, Merlin, Oregon,
97532, (503) 476-0071.

MEGATYPE SOFTWARE
Plenty of fonts were available. Also shown was FontDesigner,
FontDesigner Plus, FontVerter, MegaType Fonts, MS Designs Fonts, Safari
Fonts, Dennis Palumbo Fonts, Electronic Spinster Graphics and Bit Maker.
MegaType, PO Box 645, South Bend, In, 46624, (219) 288-7468.

MICHTRON
This was the first I have seen a Michtron booth without Gordon Monnier
standing behind the table. It was different seeing new faces who were
very interesting. Michtron products like 3D-Calc Spreadsheet were on
display. Michtron, 3201 Drummond Plaza, Newark, Delaware, 19711, (302)
454-7946.

MICRO CREATIONS
These are the makers of the GIME (Graphics Interface Modem Environment).

This new terminal program includes auto z-modem, background file transfers, VT-52, 100 and GIME emulation, text editor, graphics creation editor and many other features. For more information contact; Micro, 4609 Millbrook Way, Bakersfield, California, 93313, (800) 333-3963.

MUSICODE SOFTWARE
BlackJack Plus Version 3 on display and for sale. Musicode was right next door to Rising Star Computers and doing pretty well. There were hourly contests going on... Also available was the Voice Developement System which allows control of different instruments. Musicode, 5575 Baltimore Drive, #105-127, La Mesa, California, 91942, (619) 469-7194.

PHIL COMEAU SOFTWARE
Gramslam and Grammer Expert shown. These utilities are aimed at the writer to increase grammer skills. (Probably needed for this article since it has taken over 5 days to write!!) Phil Comeau, 43 Rueter Street, Nepean, Ontario, Canada, K2J 3Z9, (613) 825-6271.

RIMIK ENTERPRISES
Showing MultiGem a new multi-tasking system. This program allows you to run up to 6 GEM, TOS, ACC or TTP programs at the same time. Also shown was DTPaint, a full function hi-res paint accessory. Allows editing of IMG, Degas and MacPaint files while in DTP programs like Calamus, Pagestream and others. For more information contact; Rimik, 836 Osborne Street, Vista, California, 92084, (619) 630-1217.

RISING STAR COMPUTERS
This mail order company was selling at a discount price various Atari ST games and disks. Also available was a large collection of PD software for sale. Hardware such as ICD AdSpeed, Atari Mega STe and other peripherals available. Rising Star, PO Box 20038, Dayton, Ohio, 45420, (800) 252-2787. If you call these guys tell them Z*Net sent you!

STEP AHEAD SOFTWARE
New President of the IAAD was showing Tracker ST Version 3.0 for the first time at the WAACE show. Also on display was WordFlair II from Goldleaf with FSMGDOS on hand. Step Ahead, 496-A Hudson Street, New York City, New York, 10014, (212) 627-5830.

SUDDEN
Showing the their new text editor that was amazing. There were two versions available for sale. This is an EXCELLENT program for any newsletter editor. You HAVE to see it to believe it. From the time it is loaded you are hooked and have more power over text files then ever before. Read one of the past Z*Net issues for a review of the great program. Sudden, 5081 South McCarran Blvd, Reno, Nevada, 89505, (800) 421-4228.

TOAD COMPUTERS
Selling the Toad line of hardware and Atari software. Toad, 556 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd, Severna Park, Maryland, 21146, (301) 544-6943.

WIZWORKS
The WW crew was on hand showing off MugShut and loads of clip art
disks. Also available was ImageCat Version 2 and MVG MutliViewer.

WUZTECH OMNIMON PERIPHERALS
Showing off an internal 1.44 meg floppy drive, multisync monitors and
more.

UNICORN PUBLICATIONS with CompuServe and Branch Always Software. Free
subcriptions to CompuServe and upgrades to Quick-ST offered. The AIM
magazine also took subscriptions. Unicorn, 3487 Braeburn Circle, Ann
Arbor, Michigan, 48108, (313) 973-8825. For more information about
CompuServe call, (800) 848-8199.

ZUBAIR INTERFACES
Showing off Z-Keys, ZSimms, Z-Ram and other upgrade kits for the ST and
STe. Zubair, 5423B Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, California, 90712, (213)
408-6715.

SEMINARS AT WAACE

The first real seminar was on Friday evening, the day before the show.
I was on my way at the time but I was told that Dave Kaufman provided a
Midi concert.

Saturday's events started at 11am with Rick Flashman of Gribnif
Software. The topic was NeoDesk Version 3.0

The next seminar at 12pm was "Atari Tech Talk" with Ken Badertscher and
John Townsend of Atari. Nothing major was announced other than more
about TOS 3.06 and 2.06. There was also talk about an SCSI laser
printer that Atari is currently working on.

Dave Small, "Live and In Person I" started at 1pm. He started the
seminar by handing out Spectre 128 catridges to everyone attending,
without the ROMs. Dave announced that Atari has licensed TOS 2.05 to
Gadgets and Fast Technology for use with their boards, this announcement
was made at the Hard Acclerators seminar on Sunday morning. (Dave's
second seminar...)

Other seminars included Nevin Shalit, Dave Troy of Toad Computers, Dave
Small and Jim Allen in one room discussing hardware acceleration, Tom
Nielson of Esteem discussing Esteem Pilot and a "Meet The Atari Press"
seminar that I didn't know was taking place. No problem really since I
feel the press shouldn't be the focus here! But that is my opinion...

Ralph Mariano, Publisher and Editor of ST-Report was on hand with
Dana Jacobson and Jim Mirando, also editors of the publication
discussing Atari politics and audience surveys throughout the seminar.

Bob Brodie followed Mariano with additional information on some things
discussed during the previous seminar and as usual getting full
attention from the attendees and questions from the crowd. Brodie
speaking at these User Group events is almost common place now and one
of the highlights.

In closing, I had a great time and if you missed it you lost a chance
at some great prices and a good time. The WAACE group should be
applauded for setting up an excellent show and making everyone feel
comfortable.


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* WAACE COMMENTS FROM BOB BRODIE
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While indeed Sunday was markedly slower than Saturday, we never the less
enjoyed the show very much. This type of slower pace allows for more
quality time to be shared with the attendees. And the Sheraton has a
number of very nice areas where one can sit and enjoy a quiet
conversation...without the whole world watching!

Almost every developer that I spoke to was thrilled with their sales. I
understand that Joppa sold 15 STE's on Saturday, and they had a crowd
around their booth during the waning hours on Sunday for the software
specials.

Not having a booth, or a speaking slot on Sunday, I opted for a more
casual approach to the show, and went in wearing jeans (yes, blue ones!)
and my GEnie T-Shirt. I managed to escape notice *a little* bit more,
but lots of people still came up to say hi. I also got a chance to do
some honest shopping...picked up a cartoon disk from the Wiz Works guys,
an update to Tracker 3.0, and got some extensive demos on exciting
products. eSteem Pilot really was impressive. They had set up their
system to show off interactive usage of the ST between a 1040ST and a
Pioneer laser disc player. Very, very impressive. Then it was off to
the productivity room for a demo of 3D sculptured surface modeling with
Chroma Cad....running on a 130XE. VERY impressive!

I am very grateful to all of the attendees that took time to come up and
say hello. Many of them seemed very pleased to finally meet me, and
were quite kind in their comments. It's pleasing to see that so many of
the end users do appreciate my efforts at Atari! Thanks guys, it really
helps me to keep on going!

The banquet was indeed excellent! The food was wonderful, and I was
very flattered to be offered a seat at the head table. Charles Smeton
was kind enough to allow me to bring along the people that I'd promised
to dine with. That means I had the best seat in the house: Michelle
Taylor from Atari-Oz on the left, Tricia Metcalf from Gribnif on the
right, Darlah directly in front of me! :) Oh yes, and Nathan did indeed
give very fine speech. He gave quite a few of us new names (mine is
Bobbit), and all of us plenty of laughs. Well done, my friend. And you

can count of some pay backs from Dorothy! :)

If some of you don't get the bit about the speech, don't worry...you
will when he uploads his speech! <grin>

Charles Smeton is to be commended for his stellar leadership in leading
the WAACE group to another fine showing. Thanks for making my WAACE
experience so positive, Charles!

I'm sure that I have overlooked many other highlights, especially
meeting more people...getting to put the faces with the names. For
example, I got to meet Steve Rider, who does the support of the FoReM
BBS's. Great guy...thanks for the help, Steve!

Right now, the hour grows late, more later after I've had some sleep.

regards,
Bob Brodie
Director of Communications
Atari Computer Corporation

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* WAACE BANQUET SPEECH   Delivered and Written by Nathan Potechin
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First of all, allow me to thank the WAACE committee for giving me the
opportunity and honor to speak here today. I've never done this before,
speaking in front of a large group of people, at least not without a
copy of Calamus in front of me. Before I forget, I'd also like to thank
WAACE, on behalf of myself and my fellow Developers, for presenting yet
another excellent show.

I gave a great deal of thought to a subject this evening and basically
arrived at the decision that fantasy best suit my mood. I came to WAACE
to enjoy myself, meet some of my customers, meet some of GEnie's
customers, meet many of my friends, all of whom share a common interest,
and relax.

All those that haven't read Tolkiens excellent works, The Hobbit and The
Lord of the Rings trilogy are about to begin wondering what I'm talking
about, for which I apologize. It cannot be helped. I decided to go off
on a tangent and I've got the mike. I used Tolkiens stuff because his
Middle Earth became the model for my generation of fantasy Readers.

My original concept was to provide a small scenario in which leading
members of the Atari community each played some part. Our setting is
Middle Earth, our title, aptly enough, would have been... "Atari in
Middle Earth." Sounds about right. However, a few months back when I
initially started thinking along these lines I immediately encountered
a problem; which well-known member of the Atari community plays which
part. The end result of giving my imagination free rein, is that I had
so much fun and literally enjoyed myself so much figuring out who would
be whom, that I've dropped the scenario part altogether and have instead
decided to present to you this evening, for the first time anywhere,
Nathan's Guide to Atari in Middle Earth, a glossary. (Beta version C)

At this point I must add that this was intended to be a joint

presentation. Most of you know my better half Darlah Pine of GEnie
fame. What many of you do not know is that Darlah happens to be a very
credible artist. It was our intention that I would provide
descriptions, as I am about to do, and Darlah would render them in
living color. The end result should have had us all falling off our
chairs, at least this was my sincere hope. Unfortunately, Darlah
managed to burn two of her fingers bad enough doing the mundane task of
ironing and pressing clothes that she was unable to create the drawings
that would have made this a truly memorable event. So, if what is about
to follow appeals to you, perhaps we can ask Darlah, once her fingers
have healed, to draw and scan in the results one way or another and put
them on GEnie. (Please post your thoughts on this issue in the new
topic I am about to start in Category 12, topic 3.)

When I mentioned to Sam Tramiel last weekend what I had intended, he
promised to read Lord of the Rings at once, something that he had not
previously done. I'd rarely met anyone before that hadn't read Lord of
the Rings. How many here have read The Hobbit or the Trilogy? (Editor's
note: almost every single hand in the entire banquet room went up at
this question.) Anyway, Sam then asked, with a smile, if he got to be
the Lord. Now I could have responded in many ways to that little gift
from Sam but I refused to take advantage of his lack of knowledge,
advised him to read Tolkien's works and promised him that he'd get to be
the leading character. He seemed satisfied with that.

I mention that little anecdote so that you begin to understand the
quandary in which I had placed myself. Who got to be whom. Who, in
fact, was the central character, the hero. The answer is that works
such as "Lord of the Rings" provide lots of heroes; from Frodo and Bilbo
to Sam, Pippin and Merry, to Gandalf the White who starts out grey and
gets better. Classic adventure characters such as Gimli the Dwarf and
Legolas the Elf meet as opposites with artificial prejudices that vanish
when faced with the reality of each other as they actually are.

Aragorn, son of Arathorn is certainly another hero as are the hundreds
of bit players like the Rangers that did their best to protect the
innocent with or without their knowledge.

Let's not forget warriors such as valiant Boromir that failed what was
perhaps his greatest challenge after surviving so many before. The
Eagles played their part, as did the elves and the dwarves and even man
stood up to be counted in that time in Middle Earth right beside the
glorious Ents, those living trees out of legend.

Villians played their part as well, from the slimy Gollum who was once
Smeagol but became less, to the 9 Ringwraiths and Lord Sauron himself in
Mordor. Saruman the Wizard clearly demonstrated the danger of allowing
arrogance and ego to affect ones judgement. (Editors note: some of the
crowd got nervous here, wondering if I was about to lecture.)

So, my glossary, blatantly abusing Tolkiens excellent work as my guide.

The Ring centers our glosssary. Lets abuse that first. Engraved on my
ring in blazing words of fire 9 feet high (or they would be 9 feet if
the ring were substantially larger) are the immortal words "MARKET
SHARE" written in a language only those with MBA's or at least
Doctorates in Nuclear Physics can decipher, on a mostly blue background.
So now we have our OBJECT and our first picture #1. Next comes our
adventurers.

Our Wizard, in long flowing robes of silvery grey and a tall conical cap, must be a serious practioner and believer in MAGIC! Our wizard has the task of creating an infrastructure upon the foundation left to him by his many, many, many, many, many, many. many, many (7 soto voice) many, many etc. predecessors in the US, a flimsy structure indeed. Serious Magic will be required. Hence Greg Pratt will now be known as our our wizard, the mighty GREG in Picture #2.

I like Hobbits. Any Middle Earth of which I am a part, must have its Hobbits. Frodo Baggins is Tolkiens hero. Ok, some of my heroes will also be Hobbits. I picture Hobbits as roundish cherubic and hairy types, of small but stout stature and solid bare feet entirely covered by hair. Picture, if you will, a hero that manages to arrive at his goal in spite of insurmountable odds. In fact, his leadership is often confusing to us lessor mortals and mere humans. So who do I know that would appreciate the extra hair, besides Dave Flory, Sam Tramiel of course. So Sam is one of our heroes, named SAM. Picture #3.

Every hero needs a most loyal friend and follower, Frodo had Sam. Our Sam needs someone that will stick by him through thick and thin, someone to interpret to us common folk. This follower must be a salt of the earth type, with the respect of the Atari Developers and end-users alike. If our loyal person also happens to be tall, then he would have no choice but to remain stooped over, as he must be a Hobbit. So picture, if you will, Bob Brodie, stooped over, cherubic and hairy. We'll call this big Hobbit BOBBIT. (Editors Note: if you like what you read, help me make these nicknames stick.) Picture #4.

We need another Hobbit companion such as Merry, another loyal member of the Atari's own family. In this case, we will create one new Hobbit character out of two very real people. Our newest Hobbit is not afraid to try anything, no limits please, even things everyone thought impossible to achieve. Everyone was right of course but that never slowed this Hobbit down one little bit. And he does get better with age and experience. Visualize a split face, cherubic, hairy, half Ken Badertscher and John Townsend. Don't ask me how a Hobbit has half a brush cut, I leave that to Darlah's imagination in her picture # 5. The characters name, KTOWN of course.

Our fourth Hobbit companion nust be an advisor type, necessary for any adventure in Middle Earth. Brought along for both his loyalty and technical expertise, of which his knowledge is substantial, this Hobbit branched out to advise everyone on every subject, even in areas where he had absolutely no previous knowledge or experience, making him a fit companion for our little group. In honor of Tolkiens Pippin, we'll call Bill Rehbock BIPPIN. His stature naturally makes him another obvious Hobbit, albeit a well-fed one in our picture # 6.

Tolkiens original but now aged hero Bilbo can only have his counterpart in Jack, sitting in front of a fire with a blanket over his legs, nodding off. He's done his thing. It's the childrens turn. Jack, and we will call him exactly that, JACK, wakes up occassionally shouting "Business is War" before falling asleep again. He is of course, another well fed Hobbit in our picture #7..

All good adventures need a dwarf. Tolkien's Gimli set an excellent role model; a stout, solid companion, shorter than human but very broad, wit as sharp as the axe commonly found somewhere upon her person. Likes dark places or dressing in black. Our Gimli will teach by example. Hmmm, teach, education, educational, prefers black, yup, Dorothy as

Gimli. I'm no chauvanist, equal opportunity I say. Gimli of course will remain with the name GIMLI because who ever heard of a dwarf called Dorothy. This is our picture #8.

Now we need an elf like Legolas; tall, willowy, greenish tinge, light on his feet, capable of moving soundlessly through the woods, springing gracefully and fast in any direction. He is a factor in our community, striving to push the Atari envelope to its limit. This can only be Jim Allen under his new name JEGOLIS to be found in picture #9.

Time for some fierce human warrior types, must have courage and strength. Our blond barbarian, with long, flowing locks, heavy muscular development and twins, gets off on a tangent every now and then, daring to get successfully involved in other markets but is always there, valiantly striving to save the indestructible ring MARKET SHARE for Atari, sounds like Tom Harker to me, now named TOMRAH. Picture #10.

We need more warriors, lets see, someone that is a little bit different than the rest of us, someone that is a player in our community even if it is no longer recognizable as an Atari community. Key words here, off on a tangent or out in left field coupled with no longer recognizable can only be Dave Small in his role as SMALLROMIR. Make a note that SMALLROMIR does an excellent imitation of Neil Young in serious pain, especially when concentrating on code. Picture #11 is left entirely to Darlah's imagination.

I have only begun on my glossary. Frankly I ran out of time as my office nearly burned down the other day but you get the idea.

Wait, I forgot, an Ent, I like Ents. Now who could best fill our perception of a living tree. Someone that seemed oblivious to the rest of the world around him. Someone that was quite intelligent but a bit slow in delivery. Someone that came out with product after excellent product years after the demand existed, appearing to move and react a bit slower than the rest of us. The answer is starting to become clear to a few; Leonard plays my Ent. We'll call my Ent, Lent the Ent and depict him in Picture #12.

As for me, perhaps I'll also be an Ent, a living tree. Sometimes misunderstood, always striving to make that inndestructible ring named MARKET SHARE less blue. It's a slow process, leaving me open for attack by strange warriors within and without. Death looks calmly over my shoulder while I try valiantly to pervail. Please stop by ISD's booth tomorrow and check out the one picture that Darlah already did. I will be happy to show it to you. (Editors note: I'll wear the shirt again in Chicago.)

Fill in your own bad guys, for that matter there are still many good guys left in our community. A Gollum or Smeagol type character seemed perfectly obvious to so many that I decided it was best to leave well enough alone. This is all meant to be fun after all.

I thank you all for laughing with me or at me, as was my intent or hope, especially the characters that I actually used and named, in fun. I invite any and all of you to create your own middle earth glossary on known Atari personalities, whether in your local group like J.D. or Charles or any of our international community. I fully intend to upload my glosssary onto GEnie and look forward to seeing extensions, substitutions and additions from all comers. Dorothy, consider that a challenge.

To conclude, our Atari community may not be a large one, but look around
you, it happens to be a great one!!

Thank you

Nathan Potechin
President @ ISD
October 12, 1991

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* ATARI DOES SEYBOLD - REPORT                          by Dr. Paul Keith
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The Professional Systems Group has completed their second exhibition in
the Pre Press Publishing field, the 1991 Seybold Computer Publishing
Exposition. Readers of Z*Net will recall that in April, Atari sent the
Professional Systems Group to their inaugural showing at the Corporate
Electronic Publishing Show in Chicago.

The Seybold Computer Publishing Exposition is a show for professional
users of publishing tools. Attended by 25,000 users, vendors, and
developers of computers based systems flocked to San Jose for the
conference. The conference was held from October 2-4 at the San Jose
Convention Center, located in the heart of the Silicon Valley. The show
featured 260 exhibitors, plus a conference program highlighted by
minicourses and interactive learning opportunities.

Atari has climbed into a new level of professionalism with their
entrance into this high level of publishing. The Seybold show was an
explosion of color. Just having outstanding black and white production
isn't enough for professionals anymore. The serious publisher must have
access to a wide array of color professional tools. The challenge to
the Professional Systems Group is to meet the productivity requirements
of these high end users, while retaining their traditional price/
performance advantages. Thanks to the efforts of the developers
operating under the Professional Systems Group umbrella, Atari is more
than well equipped to meet those challenges.

The developers for Atari showed their wares in two different booth
settings: one put on by the Professional Systems Group itself, and a
separate booth by Goldleaf ComputerBild. In the Professional Systems
Group booth, Atari featured ten workstations featuring solutions that
formed a complimentary solution to the needs of the Seybold
professionals. That is, PostScript and non PostScript, color and
monochrome. Companies showing their products in the Atari area included
SoftLogik Publishing, CodeHead Software, ISD Marketing, Compo Software,
Hell-Linotronic, Epson America, General Parametics, Mitsubishi, GoldLeaf
ComputerBild, and of course, Atari. Hardware from Atari shown in the
booth included TT030 computers, fitted with 26 megabytes of ram, with an
80 megabyte hard disk, and a Matrix color card. Other Atari hardware in
the booth included a TTM-195 monitor showing high resolution monitor,
and the Atari SLM-605 laser printer.

SoftLogik was showing PageStream 2.1 on a 26 megabyte TT, with a TTM-195
monitor. Represented by Deron Kazmaier and Mark Wetzel, SoftLogik was

showing PostScript output, going to a Linotronic 530, or alternativly an SLM-605 laser printer via UltraScript. In addition to showing PageStream, SoftLogik announced that they are now preparing two CD-Roms for the Atari market. The first CD is to have all the of the EPS clip art from the Image Club. SoftLogik has been selling the Image Club EPS files via disk, and now will offer all twenty one volumes of the Image Club clip art. According to Deron Kazmaier, SoftLogik has received the equipment to duplicate the CD roms, and production should be underway by the time you read this! Look for availabilty by November, just in time for the Chicago Computerfest by Atari! Suggested retail pricing on the Image Club CD Rom is $799. The second CD Rom is going to contain 600 Adobe Type I fonts. This rom is again a compilation of all the Adobe Type I fonts that SoftLogik currently sells, with all of the fonts being placed on a single CD Rom. The disk will be offered in two fashions: for $200 you will be able to purchase the rom with all of the fonts on the rom, but there will only twenty fonts accessible to the purchaser. The rest of the fonts will be on the rom, but encrypted. If you want to be able to use one of the encrypted fonts, you will have to contact SoftLogik and get the code to activate the font, after paying the fee for the font. This same system is in usage on other platforms, including DEC and IBM. This allows a user to purchase all the fonts at once, but only pay for the ones that he might need as he goes along. On the other hand, the user might opt to have all 600 fonts active at once, for a price of $3999.

Softlogik is making arrangements for users/dealers to be able to purchase CD Rom players from them directly as well, to assure "one stop shopping" for people interested in the CD Rom products.

Compo Software is a German based company that has sent a representative from their UK subsidary to North American user group shows this summer. Well known across Europe for their fine word processor, That's Write, Compo attended the Pacific NorthWest Atari Festival in Vancouver, B.C. and the Southern California Atari Faire in Glendale. Compo has been "testing the waters" of the North American market before making the plunge. This has resulted in some confusion about who was representing their products, as both Rimik Enterprises and PDC were claiming to be "carrying" the Compo line of products. All of that confusion was resolved with negoitiations at Seybold, and GoldLeaf ComputerBild is going to carry Compo Products! I spoke at length with the president of Compo at Seybold, expressing my concerns about ensuring proper support for his products in North America (hey, I bought That's Write at Vancouver!), and he expressed considerable consternation about the confusion in the market place. Rest assured, it's all been resolved now, and GoldLeaf is indeed carrying the Compo line. You will be able to order That's Write, the full featured word processor, and Write On, their advanced text editor, NOW from GoldLeaf!

In addition to showing That's Write, Compo was also showing off their competitor to UltraScript, CompoScript. This product was unveiled at the Atari Messe in Germany in August. Compo Script offers additional features for users including preview of PostScript files, and the ability to print a postscript file to disk at either an IMG or TIFF file. CompoScript offers full support of TYPE 1 fonts, and like UltraScript, allows you to print to non PostScript printers. CompoScript inlcuded 35 (yes, THIRTY FIVE) Type 1 fonts from BitStream with the package. Compo is a licensed vendor of BitStream fonts, so those fonts will be available for Atari owners to purchase from GoldLeaf. I was impressed with the high speed output of CompoScript on the TT300, which Compo employees attributed to their support of the math

co-processor chip. The only concern that I found with CompoScript is
that it wasn't able to import an EPS file that was saved in Avant
Vector. Compo employees reported that they were aware of the bug, and
assured me that it would be fixed by the time they return to the US for
Comdex in late October. The reported to me that they had an upgrade
completed to the program by their programmers while they were en route
to the US.

Other products that Compo will be selling via GoldLeaf include Compo
Base, a full relational database, and Compo Commander, a desktop
replacement program and a desk accesory that will allow the user to
convert Calamus CFN fonts to GDOS, LaserBrain, or configurable to a
format of the users choice, like Dubl-Page.

Compo will also have a TSR progam, like Atari's Diablo emulator, that
will allow the user to have CompoScript like capabilties. This TSR will
allow the user to print to a postscript printer directly. A demo
version of Compo Commander is due by Comdex. CompScript requires two
megs of ram, and suggested retail price is $349.

GoldLeaf also showed Didot Professional, a full featured color
publishing progam. The product includes pages layout, illustration,
type design and font conversion, auto-tracing, and high speed type
handling. Coupled with Retouche Professional CD, and it's color
libraries, Didot represents a professional solution to color page layout
needs.

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* THE ROAD TO 9600 - PART 2                                by Wes Cowell
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Editors Note: Part one of this series appeared in Issue #91-41.

HALF DUPLEX SYSTEMS
(Virtual Full Duplex)

Half duplex solutions devote the entire bandwidth to 9600 bps in one
direction at a time, and "ping-pong" the data flow back and forth to
simulate full duplex. This is potentially the simplest scheme. Its
performance is acceptable in data transfer applications that don't
involve user interaction, i.e. file transfers. Even so, advanced error-
control protocols that require ACKnowledgments to be sent in response to
received data blocks generate a high number of "line reversals" which
greatly impair overall data throughput. In short, the benefit of higher
speed is so significantly compromised by line reversals in half duplex
sessions that the net gain in data throughput may be marginal at best.

If users want to operate in an interactive mode, their data must be sent
to the remote computer, the data channel must be reversed, and then the
data must be echoed back. This process results in significant turn-
around delays which can be very frustrating to users.

Half duplex modems of this kind are most often based on CCITT
recommendation V.29 for half duplex 9600 bps transmission on the dial-up
network. V.29 based data pumps used in facsimile systems are available
as LSI chip sets, providing a short-cut to modem manufacturers,

particularly to companies that don't develop their own modem technologies. But the major problem is that the V.29 modulation scheme has been outdated by the fact that it operates in a half duplex mode and doesn't provide good signal to noise performance. The V.32 recommendation, which operates in a full duplex mode and employs Trellis Coding Modulation offers greater throughput and a greater immunity to channel impairments.

To the best of my knowledge, modems employing V.29-based modulation include products from Racal-Vadic, Comspec, Develcon, Gamma Technology, Microcomm, and Electronic Vaults, Inc. (EVI). These modems, however, are NOT mutually signal compatible -- cross-manufacturer compatibility does not exist.

Another modem in the half duplex category, but not based on V.29 modulation, is the Telebit Trailblazer (R), which uses a proprietary modulation method.

Trailblazer is based on a multi-carrier technique. Conceptually, the transmission channel is divided into many (512), independent, very narrow channels (think of our two-lane highway and imagine it as having 512 very narrow lanes (say, for bicycles) going in one direction and you've got a fair idea of how Trailblazer divides the bandwidth). The main advantage is that no receiver adaptive equalizer is needed because each channel is very narrow compared to the overall channel bandwidth.

Further, in the Trailblazer modulation scheme, the modulation rate in each narrow channel can be changed somewhat independently. Trailblazer is different from many other modems in that the decision to fall back to lower speeds is built into the modem protocol, rather than controlled by the user's computer port. It is claimed that in the face of channel impairments, throughput can be adapted gracefully to channel conditions. Traditional modulation systems would have to fall back in larger steps. But there are three inherent MAJOR problems:

1) The turn-around delay is very long compared to conventional
    modulation techniques because data must be sent in large blocks.
    A typed character may take several seconds to be echoed back to the
    system that sent it. As a result, the system fails to achieve the
    illusion of full duplex and is not really suited to interactive
    online sessions.

2) The Trailblazer receiver cannot "track" carrier "phase jitter"
    (phase jitter can be thought of in terms of "phase shift": think of
    how the whine of a race car goes from higher to lower as it passes
    the viewer -- the frequency of the sound is said to be "shifted" or
    "jittered"). Instead of cancelling out phase jitter (which is
    commonly encountered on long distance calls) the Trailblazer can
    only respond by lowering throughput to gain more immunity to phase
    jitter.

3) The ability to transmit at the maximum rate when subject to channel
    impairment is considerably less than for conventional modems. There
    is one notable exception: the multiple channel technique offers
    extremely good immunity to impulse noise because the impulse energy
    is distributed over narrow channels. While conventional modems can
    achieve similar results through special coding or filtering
    techniques they rarely implement such methods.

ASYMMETRICAL FREQUENCY DIVISION

When one considers the nature of most PC datacomm applications, it is realized that most applications are interactive, involving manual (typed) data entry from one end and data file transmission from the other end.

Few, if any, PC users can justify using an expensive 9600 bps channel to carry their typed characters when they realize that 300 bps translates to 360 words per minute. Assuming one could type 100 words per minute, even a 100 bps transmission channel would be sufficient.

On the other hand, file transfer should take advantage of the tremendous speed of the microprocessor. Serial ports are often set at data rates in excess of 19,000 bps.

Considering these inherent characteristics, a communications scheme that incorporated a high speed and a low speed channel would be best suited for most PC datacomm applications.

Remembering the highway analogy (higher speeds mean wider lanes), one can see how such a method would grant modem designers a large portion of the available bandwidth for a 9600 bps channel and still leave enough room to accommodate a narrow 300 bps channel without any channel overlap.

By utilizing two discreet channels, such a modem would avoid costly, complex echo-cancellation schemes. And, because the channels carry data in both directions simultaneously, the communications link is a true full duplex connection. This means that data entered at one system would be almost instantaneously echoed back -- eliminating the frustrating turn-around delay experienced in half duplex sessions.

USRobotics has developed just such a modem. It passes data in one direction using the V.32 modulation technique (a very robust method that is very immune to phone line impairments) but employs only a 300 bps channel in the opposite direction so that the channels do not overlap and echo-cancellation is not necessary.

The use of the high-speed channel by the two modems is based on data demand. In most applications, however, "channel swapping" will not be required. For interface elegance, the modems employ a 4K buffer that allow them to perform data rate conversion: sending and receiving speeds remain constant between the modem and the computer -- it is only in between the modems that transmitted and received data run at different speeds.

For interactive sessions, users are assigned the low-speed channel while the data sent to them (long mail messages, menus, files, etc.) in the 9600 bps channel.

For file transfer sessions, the data blocks that make up a file are sent in the 9600 bps channel while the corresponding ACKnowledgments are returned in the 300 bps channel. An asymmetric frequency division scheme is ideal for file transfer where large data blocks (usually several hundred bytes in length) are transmitted in the high-speed channel and the ACKs (usually only a few bytes in length) are carried in the low-speed channel.

If a user switches from an interactive mode to file transfer and then back to interactive mode, the high speed channel is dynamically and

automatically assigned to the system with the greatest data demand.

A BRIEF COMPARISON

Three options exist for data communicators who desire to operate at 9600 bps:

1) V.32-type modems offer a full duplex connection but do so by virtue of echo-cancellation. This technique is so complex, and has proven so difficult to employ, that the cost for such modems will remain prohibitively high and their implementation a delicate task for some time to come.

2) Half duplex modems (either V.29 or multi-carrier) offer 9600 bps but the turn-around delay inherent in half duplex links severely compromise overall throughput. This degradation of throughput, however, can be more than offset by data compression techniques assuming the modems in question support identical compression protocols and are operating on relatively "clean" phone lines. Both half duplex methods suffer disproportionate degradation on "noisy" lines: the V.29 modems must spend more and more time in line reversals as detected data errors increase, and the multi-carrier modems must sacrifice throughput to gain noise immunity.

3) Asymmetrical Frequency Division offers 9600 bps communications in a true full duplex implementation. By efficiently utilizing the available bandwidth, these modems provide users with high speed file transfer capabilities and fast response in interactive sessions. Because the transmit and receive data channels do not overlap, expensive echo-cancelling techniques are unnecessary making these modems economically efficient.

IN CONCLUSION

Until a widely recognized standard is agreed upon by the standards community, and implemented by several manufacturers, modem buyers must weigh the benefits and detriments of each 9600 bps scheme.

V.32 would be best where symmetrical, full duplex, synchronous communication is desired (for example, dial-up HDLC links between multiplexers) and where the user can modify his software to accommodate non-"AT" command-driven modems.

V.29 modems would be likely solutions where absolute lowest price is required and conformance to an international standard (in a very limited sense) is desired.

Multi-carrier transmission schemes are well-suited to applications that require maximum one-way throughput and where circuit conditions are known to be good. This transmission method is also ideally suited for circuits where immunity to impulse noise is paramount.

Users who most often work with one-way file transfers (PC-to-PC) or with real-time applications may opt for an Asymmetrical Frequency Division scheme, which is suited equally well for either application. The elegant approach to the frequency division (avoiding overlapping bandwidths) also allows these modems to present a very economical ratio between dollars and bps.

Potential high-speed-modem buyers should also consider the aspects of

ease-of-use, ease-of-implementation, and downward compatibility with
existing implemented standards (the CCITT's V.22bis for 2400 bps, Bell
212A for 1200 bps, and Bell 103 for 200 bps).

POST SCRIPT

Many modem users have voiced confusion and consternation about the lack
of compatibility between modem manufacturers at speeds greater than 2400
bps.

Modem manufacturers have embraced the Bell 212A and 103 standards for
1200 and 300 bps. In these post-divestiture days, however, Bell no
longer sets modem standards in the U.S. and hence, U.S. modem
manufacturers have turned to the CCITT as a definitive source for
standards. The industry-wide acceptance of the CCITT's V.22bis standard
for 2400 bps is the best example of this shift.

The CCITT recommendations V.29 and V.32 for 9600 bps have not resulted
in compatible implementations. It is important to remember that V.29
was originally developed as a four-wire full duplex leased-line modem
and has since been adapted by various manufacturers to encompass half
duplex dial up applications. Other problems with V.29 are that it
compromises transmission speed and is poor for interactive sessions.
V.32 is proving to be prohibitively complex and exceptionally difficult
to implement (driving development and production costs up).

Recognizing the need for an alternative to the V.32 recommendation, the
CCITT has requested proposals from modem manufacturers.

Presently, two proposals are being considered by the CCITT. One is the
multi-carrier scheme developed and sponsored by Telebit. The other is
an Asymmetrical Frequency Division scheme developed and sponsored by
USRobotics.

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* REGULATIONS ON MAILORDER   Part 3
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(This document is from the Federal Trade Commission, San Francisco, CA.
It contains the various regulations regarding mail order purchases.)

(38 Stat. 717, as amended; 15 U.S.C. 41, et seq.)
[40 FIR 49492, Oct. 22, 1975]

SS 435.2 Definitions.

For Purposes of this part:

(a) "Shipment" shall mean the act by which the merchandise is
physically placed in the possession of the carrier.

(b) "Receipt of a properly completed order" shall mean:

(1) Where there is a credit sale and the buyer has not previously
tendered partial payment, the time at which the seller charges the
buyer's account;

(2) Where the buyer tenders full or partial payment in the proper
amount the form of cash, check or money order, the time at which the
seller has received both said Payment and an order from the buyer
containing all he information needed by the seller Process and ship the
order.

Provided, however, That where the seller receives notice that the check
or money order tendered by the buyer been dishonored or that the buyer
not qualify for a credit sale, "receipt Of a Properly Completed Order"
shall mean the time at which (i) the seller receives notice that a check
or money order for the proper amount tendered by the buyer has been
honored, (ii) the buyer tenders cash in the proper amount or (iii) the
seller receives notice that the buyer qualifies for a credit sale.

(c) "Refund" shall mean:

(1) Where the buyer tendered full payment for the unshipped merchandise
in the form of cash, check or money order, a return of the amount
tendered in the form of cash, check or money order;

(2) Where there is a credit sale:

(i) And the seller Is a creditor, a copy of a credit memorandum or the
like or an account statement reflecting the removal or absence of any
remaining charge incurred as a result of the sale from the buyer's
account;

(ii) And a third party is the creditor, a copy of an appropriate credit
memorandum or the like to the third party creditor which will remove the
charge from the buyer's account or a statement from the seller
acknowledging the cancellation of the order and representing that he has
not taken any action regarding the order which will result in a charge
to the buyer's account with the third party;

(iii)And the buyer tendered partial payment for the unshipped
merchandise in the form of cash, check or money order, a return of the
amount tendered in the form of cash, check or money order.

(d) "Prompt refund" shall mean:

(1) Where a refund is made pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) or (2)(iii) of
this section a refund sent to the buyer by first class mail within seven
(7) working days of the date on which the buyer's right to refund vests
under the provisions of this part;

(2) Where a refund is made pursuant to ParagraPh (c)(2) (i) or (it) of
this section. a refund sent to the buyer by first class mail within one
(1) billing cycle from the date on which the buyer's right to refund
vests under the provisions of this part.

(e) The "time of solicitation" of an order shall mean that time when
the seller has:

(1) Mailed or otherwise disseminated he solicitation to a prospective
purchaser,

(2) Made arrangements for an advertisement containing the solicitation
to pear in a newspaper, magazine or he like or on radio or television
which cannot be changed or cancelled without incurring substantial

expense, or

(3) Made arrangements for the printing of a catalog, brochure or the
like which cannot be changed without incurring substantial expense, in
which the solicitation in question forms an insubstantial part.

This concludes this article. Refer to the previous Z*Net releases for
Parts 1 and 2.

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* BUILD YOUR OWN HARDDRIVE - PART 2   by Terry Schreiber
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Now that you have decided on a mechanism it is time to look at host
adapters. There are many on the market some you may know of and some
not. The most popular of these is the ICD ADSCSI Plus. ICD makes two
adapters for external drives the ADSCSI and the ADSCSI Plus. The
difference between the two is the ADSCSI Plus also contains a built in
clock to set your time at boot-up. Both of these units come with
software that is very easy to use and consistantly being upgraded. For
those looking at adding an internal drive to their Mega ST system there
is the Micro, complete with all the hardware to mount your drive inside
your computer. ICD has been supporting the Atari computer since the old
Atari 800 days and is definitely the industry's choice. ICD software is
also hardware dependant. This means you require their host adapter to
use their software.

Atari host adapters although not readily available at your dealer can be
found mail order through places like Best Electronics. The drawback
with this configuration is the software. Although the software does
support the entering of the various drive types it is not menu
selectable with the many drives available such as the ICD or the Supra
software.

Supra more well known as late for their modems, produce an external and
internal host adapter. Supra is another company that has been on the
scene since the eight bit days. The Supra software comes in about the
middle between the Atari and the ICD. I am not sure if Supra is even
still offering their host adapters but a quick call to Albany Oregon
will help you find that out.

After your selection of a harddrive and host adapter your selections
become much easier. You must now decide on a style of case - keeping in
mind possible expansion in the future. There are shoebox cases like the
Atari SH204, XT cases, AT cases, small, medium and large towers. There
are custom cases that include switching and a circuit breaker with plugs
to run your whole system. If size is a problem then possibly a shoebox
case or small tower. If desk space is at a premium then maybe a full
size tower to stand beside your desk. An XT or AT case will double as a
monitor stand if you have the desk space available for it and is usually
the cheapest and most reddily available.

Got your case? Good! Did it come with a power supply? Remember that
if you are shopping for a power supply look for two things. Does it fit
the case, and in this instance bigger is better. The larger the rating

on your power supply the better off you are. If you buy a sixty-five
watt power supply you are minimal for a one drive system. A 150w supply
is better and 200 watt is optimum but some cases will not allow their
installation - remember this when purchasing your case.

Back next week with part III - Installation and Set-Up.

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* READER COMMENTARY   by Ed Krimen
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                   ADVERTISE, ADVERTISE, ADVERTISE

Atari users, dealers, and developers have been demanding for what seems
like a lifetime that Atari must advertise and successfully market their
ST line of computers. This clamoring is due to Atari's track record for
the past few years which has included the lack of advertising, the lack
of a consistent, abundant flow of shipped products, and a pathetic
amount of support for its users, dealers, and developers in the United
States.

I want to see Atari survive, however. I hate hearing that dealers are
closing, that developers are leaving the ST market, and that people are
selling their STs and buying other computers. For whatever reason, they
can't afford to stick with Atari any longer, and I don't blame them.

As an optimist though, I see signs of the situation improving. I don't
know how long it will take, but the signs are definitely there. I
certainly hope, and I know others hope, that results will occur soon,
however.

ATARI HARDWARE SUPPORT

I don't think we thought about it then, but looking back on it now, the
release of TOS 1.04, Rainbow TOS, was the first step. The chips
demonstrate that Atari had to spend many man-hours and money to upgrade
TOS. If they weren't planning on supporting the ST in the future, they
wouldn't have spent the time developing and releasing the new chips.
Moreover, it showed that Atari still wanted to support the users which
had purchased their computers before. Atari didn't require that the
users purchase a new computer, such as an STE, but that they could
upgrade their old computer, to as close to an STE as possible, for under
$100.

The next sign was the STE. Again, Atari wouldn't have spent the money
to develop a new computer if they weren't planning on staying with the
ST market in the future. The STE has a 4096-color palette, 8-bit PCM
stereo sound, SIMMs for easy memory expandibility, and now a very low
price which can get a lot of machines out to the marketplace. It's
ready to compete aggressively. Consequently, this action will
theoretically give developers a much larger userbase to provide products
for. Many computer shoppers will see the low price and the power of the
computer, and buy it. Developers can then sell more products to more
users, and then this encourages more developers to enter the market to
provide more products. We, the users, get stuff to use for our computer
and the developers get more money. It works out nicely, doesn't it?

Next, we have the MegaSTE. This computer runs along the lines of the
purposes for the STE, but with more of an exclamation point. With a CPU
running at 16Mhz and a business-like appearance to match the TT, the
computer demonstrates that Atari doesn't just make game machines. As I
said before, Atari wouldn't have spent the money to develop this fine
product if it wasn't planning to stick around. If they were going to
abandon the ST, they would have done so a long time ago and stopped
using valuable money and resources to enhance it. Common sense dictates
that one doesn't spend money on an item that it doesn't want around in
the future.

The TT030 is a rare case. Atari's had this one announced for a long
time, so we've all known about it more or less. Few people have
witnessed its power however, because as of only a few weeks ago did it
only have an FCC Class A certification. This means that it could not be
sold to the general public, but only to those persons who intended to
use it in a non-residential, business setting. We now hear that Class B
TT's with 1.44meg drives should be available in the mid-fall, around
Comdex time.

Atari users were told by Atari last November that the TT030 would pass
Class B right after Comdex (last year's Comdex, supposedly :^). Well,
it's September of the following year and it just got approved, but we
still haven't seen any of the Class B models yet. Let's hope the
machines arrive without delay.

A similar situation is the Stacy debacle. The Stacy is essentially a
luggable 1040ST with built-in hard drive and an LCD screen. It was
designed and marketed for musicians. Like the old TT, it has no FCC
Class B certification, which means that it cannot be sold as a product
which the general public can purchase. The Stacy has been available in
various configurations as a Class A product for a few years now. One
would imagine that Atari would fix whatever it was so that the Stacy
could get FCC Class B and have the opportunity to be sold more widely.
But, when the Stacy came out, people complained that it was too big, too
heavy, and it consumed more power in fifteen minutes than New York City
did in a year.

Today, we await the release of the STBook, which, according to people at
Atari, has passed FCC Class B tests the first time around; this means,
it will be available to the general public immediately upon its release,
which is said to be around COMDEX, even though the STBook will be in
short supply until the end of this year due to the limited quanities of
the Epson LCD screens. I have seen the STBook and it's going to be on
everyone's wish list. It's ultra-small, ultra-light, and has ultra-low
power requirements. It seems that Atari listened to the complaints of
its users and decided to drastically change their portable ST instead of
upgrading and developing the old Stacy. Instead of spending money to
further develop the Stacy to make it an FCC Class B product, they
decided to spend the money to design a whole new, much improved product.

I had surmised that this was the same step that Atari was going to take
with the TT030 -- that they were eventually going to scrap it in favor
of much more improved models, such as those rumored to debut in 1992.
The TT030 started out as a machine with a 16Mhz 68030 CPU. Some experts
on GEnie believe that when Atari upgraded it to a 32Mhz 68030, that made
it more difficult to pass the Class B requirements. Now we know that
not only does the next version of the TT have Class B certification --
due to Robert Joplin, an FCC expert who used to work for IBM and TI, now

hired by Atari -- but apparently he also succeeded in making the former
version of the TT pass. What the next version of the TT030 will add, if
anything other than Class B certification and 1.44meg drives, we can
only hope and wait to see.

ATARI SOFTWARE SUPPORT

Another indication that Atari plans to support its current and future
userbase is illustrated by three Atari software products. The first is
the release of the Extensible Control Panel for ST and STE users.
Previously, it was only available to MegaSTE and TT030 owners because it
was included with their computers and was needed to support specific
hardware on their machines. As I understand it, programmers at Atari
made some changes in the Extensible Control Panel necessary for older
versions of TOS and wrote up documentation for the package. The
software replaces the old Control Panel and adds some remarkable
features. Designed as a desk accessory to allow the user to configure
his system, the Extensible Control Panel can load different modules, or
control panel extensions (CPX), to control different aspects of the
computer. These extensions can be told to reside in memory or to be
loaded when they are needed. Some of the included CPXs control the
modem port, the printer port, the color setup, and other things
depending upon what kind of system you have, like stereo sound volume
and balance for the STE, MegaSTE, and TT. As more CPXs become available
from developers, you can easily add them to your collection.

FSM GDOS, a GDOS replacement, was released at the Glendale show. It's
currently offered as an upgrade for WordFlair II owners for $35, which
also includes an updated version of their software. Reports of this
item claim that's it's amazing and that it's just what the ST needs.
Atari had said earlier in the year that it should have been available in
August for a price under $100. Now we learn it will be available on
October 1 for the retail price of $49.95. They must charge for it
because the software contains some copyrighted material for which they
must pay a royalty.

The third example of Atari's planned support is their purchase of the
WordUp source code. This WYSIWYG (what-you-see-is-what-you-get) GDOS
word processor had gone through three versions when it was with Neocept.
Preliminary reports suggest that Atari plans to bundle it with their
computers after they make some changes.

The problem with citing these examples is that no one, not even Atari,
could predict exactly when FSM GDOS was going to be available, let alone
when the new, revamped WordUp will be available. FSM GDOS was supposed
to be ready August 1st. Who knows when Atari's new word processor from
WordUp's source code may appear, if ever. But the release of FSM GDOS
and the Extensible Control Panel are testaments that the new Atari word
processor has an excellent chance of becoming a reality.

ADVERTISING

There has never been a national U.S. television ad campaign for the ST.
Dealers are offered a co-op advertising arrangement with Atari, but very
few seem to take advantage of it. The Stacy was advertised for several
months in music magazines, but advertising a computer which isn't
available to everyone isn't what users have in mind. The STE, MegaSTE,
and TT are now featured in an ad in Keyboard magazine. We hope this is
the beginning of years of advertising from Atari. We wish it will
spread through to desktop publishing magazines, as well as general

publications in the future.

Many have seen the flashy Atari Lynx ads on TV or the multi-page
advertisements in games magazines. Moreover, the Lynx free-game
promotion is an excellent marketing ploy. But, as people see these
advertisements, they wonder where the ST ads are. After all, if Atari
is spending so much money to develop the ST, why aren't they promoting
them like the Lynx?

If you've been on airplanes a lot or read business-oriented
publications, I'm sure you've seen advertisements for Atari's Portfolio.
They even included an 800 number which you can call to get more
information about the Portfolio and find a dealer which stocks them.
But, again, ST enthusiasts wonder why they see support for these MS-DOS
compatible palmtops and nothing for the ST.

My guess is that when (not if) we see advertisements for the ST, they
will be of the same caliber as the Lynx and Portfolio promotions. The
ads will more than likely be in the form of newspaper and magazine ads.
These ads are less expensive to produce than television ads, and they
offer the opportunity to focus them on a specific demographic group.
National television ads like the Lynx ads would be great, but they are
expensive and may not be viewed by the group that Atari wishes to
target. For example, Atari advertised the Lynx on MTV and sometimes
during cartoons on weekday afternoons because they knew they would reach
children and teenagers -- those most likely to purchase a Lynx. The
Lynx was also advertised in game magazines, like Electronic Gaming
Monthly, because that's where people who were interested in video games
would look for information.

Publications which may include ST ads could be some of the same that
featured Portfolio ads, such as the Wall Street Journal and New York
Times. On the other hand, Atari may choose to concentrate their
advertising funds on niche markets, like desktop publishing and MIDI.
In this case, they may advertise in Publish and, as they've done before,
Electronic Musician and Keyboard. I'm not ruling out the use of
television to advertise their products, but if they do indeed decide to
use that medium, you may see ads on CNN and during newscasts on other
stations. This penetration allows Atari to focus on adults who watch
the news for business information, or those most likely to purchase a
computer for themselves at home or at their place of employment.

However, if you already use and enjoy your ST computer, why would you
want to see advertising? The phrase "strength in numbers" works well
here. Advertising will create demand which, in turn, will create sales
of Atari computers. Greater numbers of Atari computers that are sold
will encourage developers to concentrate on the market and produce
software and hardware products for owners to buy for their computers.
If there are no computers sold, then no one will produce software and
hardware for the computer, and it will easily become deceased. Nobody
wants a computer for which there is no third-party support for it. For
example, the life of the MS-DOS clone rests almost entirely on the
number of developers producing and supporting products for it. The
basic MS-DOS computer is no better than an Atari 8-bit computer, such as
400, 800, 1200XL, and 130XE, but it has a virtually infinite number of
companies supporting it -- so it survives and survives well.

As I mentioned, with successful advertising comes demand. The question
is if Atari can supply computers for this demand. As it is now, Atari
sells all the computers that they manufacture, even though there are

very few dealers left in the U.S. If the advertising is successful,
Atari must feed that demand. The remaining number of dealers in the
U.S. will not be able to carry the load of customers seeking Atari
computers. For this reason, it has been suggested that Atari return to
mass marketing to get as much market saturation of their products as
possible. It has been rumored that Atari may sell computers through
such outlets as Circuit City, the giant electronics retailer. If this
deal succeeds, I believe it can only help Atari, if their manufacturing
plants can keep up with demand.

I still worry though. Atari has a good plan with the mass marketing
distribution, and they have recently announced that the contracts are
almost complete for General Electric to service Atari computers through
their service centers for those that don't have a local dealer. That's
fantastic, but where do ST users get their software? I doubt Circuit
City will provide a wide selection, if any, and there aren't enough
dealers around to provide local software support. Atari's Softsource --
a database of third-party products, said to be pressed on CD-ROM in a
few months and then offered for $29.95 -- is currently available on
GEnie in the ST Roundtable, and is going to be offered to Atari dealers
on CD-ROM so that users can demo programs at their dealers' stores.
However, there aren't enough dealers to cater to the current users, not
to mention new users. How are new users going to find out about the
software if there are no ST magazines on the racks? Atari's Softsource
seems to partially address the problem, but it only seems to help
current Atari users. My suggestion is that Atari could offer a free
subscription to Atari Explorer, Atari's company-run magazine, with their
computers so that new computer owners know where to find software, mail
order at least. Furthermore, I applaud the efforts of the AtariUser
staff to get a wide distribution for their magazine, but unfortunately
not many bookstores wish to handle a small, inexpensive, cheap-paper-
backed magazine. And, ST Informer and Current Notes aren't distributed
in bookstores.

I said in the beginning that Atari users, dealers, and developers have
been asking for advertising from Atari. But that is only one-third of
the solution. Atari also needs consistent and abundant production as
well as good distribution to get computers to their customers. They've
shown these three characteristics through the success of the Portfolio
and Lynx, so they definitely know how to do it. Their continued support
and development of the ST demonstrates that they want it to be around
for a while. The question that remains is not IF we will see
advertising, production, and distribution of ST computers -- but WHEN?!

We all hope it's sooner than later.